



METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission
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STAFF RECOMMENDATION **Salemtown Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay** **February 20, 2013**

Application: Salemtown Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay

Map and Parcel Numbers: multiple

Council Districts: 19

Applicant: Council Member Erica Gilmore

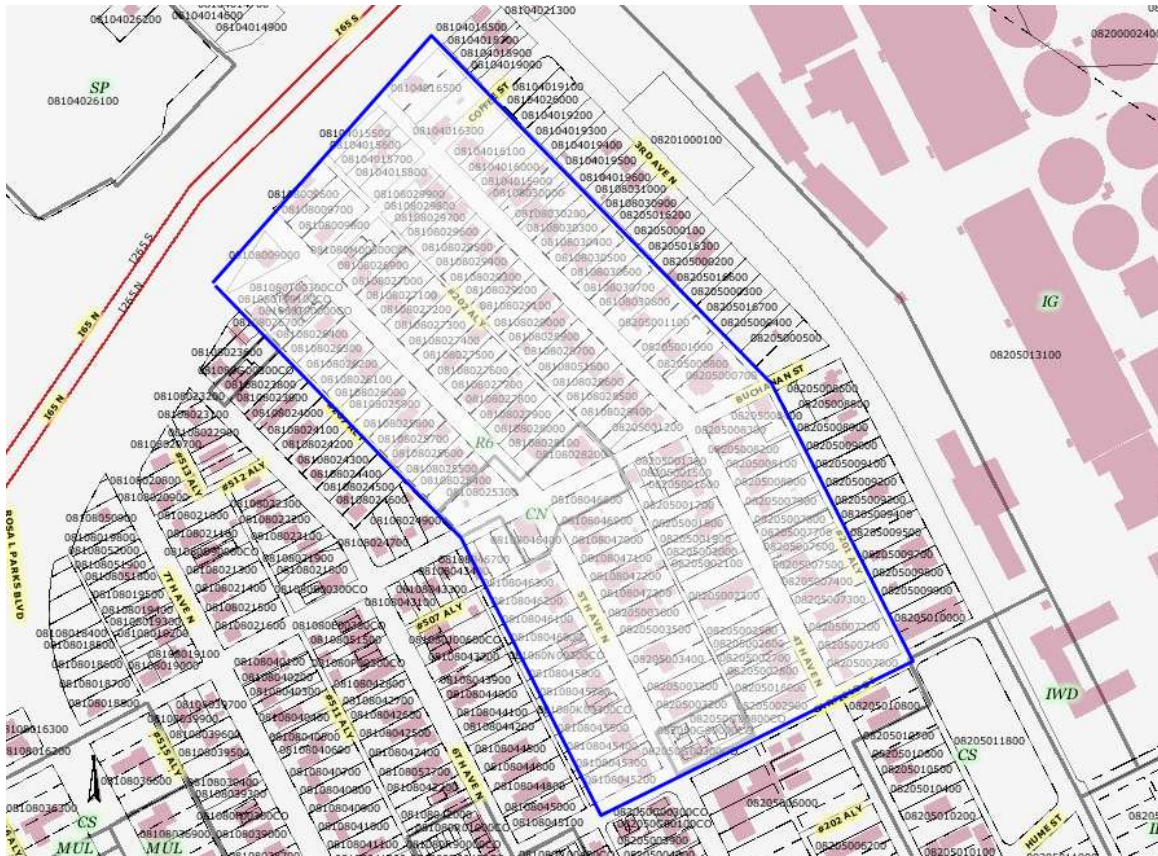
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Description of Project: Councilmember Erica Gilmore is requesting a Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay for the Salemtown neighborhood which includes 4th and 5th Avenues North, between I-65N and Garfield Street and portions of Garfield, Buchanan and Coffee Streets.

Recommendation Summary: Staff suggests the Commission recommend to City Council the Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay for the Salemtown neighborhood and the deferral of the adoption of design guidelines to allow for continued neighborhood discussion.

Attachments
A: Overlay Boundaries
B. Photographs

Proposed boundaries of Salemtown Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay



Applicable Ordinance:

Article III. Historic Overlay Districts

17.36.120.A. Historic Districts Defined. Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Conservation Districts. These districts are defined as geographical areas which possess a significant concentration, linkage or continuity of sites, buildings, structures or objects which are united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development, and that meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. The district is associated with an event that has made a significant contribution to local, state or national history; or
2. It includes structures associated with the lives of persons significant in local, state or national history; or
3. It contains structures or groups of structures that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic value, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
4. It has yielded or may be likely to yield archaeological information important in history or prehistory; or
5. It is listed or is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Background:

Due to its proximity to downtown, the neighborhood is experiencing an increased amount of new construction, some of which is not appropriate for the neighborhood. It is the desire of the neighborhood to grow but to also retain their unique historic character.

The neighborhood has been in discussion about the overlay for more than a year and has hosted small meetings with the neighborhood organization's officers and larger informational meetings open to everyone. Councilmember Erica Gilmore hosted the most recent informational meeting on January 7, 2013, 7 p.m. at the Morgan Community Center, 411 Hume Street. The neighborhood organization noticed the MHZC meeting, the Planning Commission's meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 28, and the Council's Public Hearing scheduled for Tuesday, March 5 via mailed notice to property owners, a newspaper ad and yard signs.

A draft of the design guidelines has been available on the MHZC website for approximately two months. Notice of the meeting also provided the direct link to the design guidelines and information on how someone could obtain a printed copy. The current draft design guidelines considers a boundary that is larger than what is now being considered. They were written following the general format of previous neighborhood conservation design guidelines and based on an architectural survey of the neighborhood and the National Park Service's Secretary of Interior's Standards, as required by state enabling legislation. Because the neighborhood is still discussing details of the design guidelines, staff recommends deferring adoption.

Analysis and Findings:

The portion proposed for an overlay is a smaller portion of the overall area that is considered the Salemtown neighborhood which extends between I-65 and Hume Street and 3rd and 7th Avenues. This area was chosen based on the fact that it has the highest concentration of historic properties. Within the proposed boundaries, fifty one (51%) are contributing structures to the historic character of the district, fourteen percent (14%) are vacant, and thirty-five percent (35%) are non-contributing. The properties considered for the Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay consists of properties zoned R6, CN and MUN.

Much of the land that is now Salemtown was originally hunting grounds that were acquired by David McGavock after he moved from Virginia to Fort Nashborough in 1786. He acquired property in Davidson County on both the north and south sides of the Cumberland River. His sons Dr. David T. and Lysander McGavock inherited the land from their father. Dr. D.T. McGavock who subdivided the first portion, between Hume and Buchanan Streets, and 4th Avenue North (Cherry Street) and 5th Avenue North (Summer Street) in 1855. The development of this area was a time of growth for Nashville. The city had just added gas street lamps and begun construction on the State Capitol and a suspension bridge across the Cumberland River.

Development for the rest of Salemtown would have to wait until after the Civil War. Just three years after the area was incorporated into Nashville's city limits in 1865, Dr. McGavock expanded his initial subdivision north along 4th Avenue. Soon after, he developed the North Nashville Real Estate Company and in 1870 platted the area between Clay and Monroe Streets and Buena Vista Street and 5th Avenue (formerly Summer Street..) *In 1904 Downtown street names changed to numbered streets: 4th Avenue North was Cherry Street and 5th Avenue North was Summer Street.*

By 1897 the area was approximately 35% developed with the greater density close to downtown. The development was mainly residential with single- and two-family homes. An exception was a two-story tenement house (demolished) located at 1713-1715 4th Avenue North (Cherry Street). In addition, a small amount of industry was scattered throughout the residential area. The 1897 Sanborn map shows two steam powered soap companies: the D.F. Brown soap factory at the corner of 3rd Avenue (College Street) and Hume Street and Kaphan Soap located mid-block between Buchanan and Garfield Streets. An 1881 ad for Kaphan states that their brands are "Extra Olive," "Mottled German," and "Champion" and that they deliver anywhere in the city. There were also two slaughter houses: A slaughter house and sausage kitchen was located at the corner of Buchanan Street and 4th Avenue North (College Street) and Chas Hoff Slaughter House at the corner of 5th Avenue North (Summer Street) and Buchanan Street. With the exception of the American Rule Manufacturing complex located at 1807 3rd Avenue North (College Street) industry was gone from the neighborhood by 1914.

Salemtown has always been home to the working-class. In 1910, some typical jobs included domestic, general laborer, clerk, grocer and bottle maker. By 1950, the

occupations were similar and included laborers for brick, carpentry, shoe and chemical companies and Werthan Bag, as well as grocers, firemen and an interior decorator. At least as early as 1910, the neighborhood was racially mixed with approximately 25% of its residents being African-American. It has always been a neighborhood of transition with very few of the families in residence in 1910 remaining in 1950. Rental property was often included within the main structure or in the rear. In 1950, almost half of the homes were rented rather than owner-occupied. Today, approximately 20% of the residents are owner occupied.

The name of the neighborhood and when the name was adopted is unknown. It was possibly associated with the Salem A.M.E. church; however, current members do not believe that is the case. Other residents believe it came from an influx of individuals from the Salem, North Carolina area. Although the name “Salem town” does not appear in written histories of the area, residents have been using the name for at least two generations.

Architectural Style and Form



Shotgun house at 1714
4th Avenue North

The architectural styles are simple with several common house forms evident. One prominent form is a “shotgun” house, which is a long, narrow, one-story building derived from a Yoruba housing type via Haiti and later from Louisiana. It was most popular in urban areas after the Civil War. Examples in Salemtown have either a front porch, a long side porch with the entrance towards the back of the porch, or a recessed entrance.



Gabled-ell at 1805 4th Avenue
North

Other common forms found in the district are gabled-ells which have an “L” shaped footprint and simple side-gabled buildings which typically have a shed-roof full porch, a centered gabled partial-width porch, no porch, or a recessed entrance.



Hipped roof house at 1706 5th
Avenue North

Hipped roof bungalows are also seen throughout the district and typically have a full-width porch or a “cutaway” porch within the main body of the building.

All these forms are seen with a variety of styles, mainly Italianate, Queen Anne Colonial Revival, and Craftsman styles. Duplexes in the neighborhood are typically side-by-side with two front entrances and one or two front porches. With one exception, all historic dwellings are one or one and one-half stories tall.

Recommendation

The potential neighborhood conservation zoning meets section 17.36.120.A.3 as it contains a significant amount of architecturally important buildings that embody the distinctive characteristics of their type and period and because the neighborhood is the greatest collection of turn-of-the-century worker housing remaining in the Metro area.

Staff suggests the Commission recommend to Metro Council that the Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay be applied to the Salemtown neighborhood and that adoption of the design guidelines be deferred for continued neighborhood discussion.

Examples of historic homes



1821 4th Avenue North



1809 5th Avenue North



1703 5th Avenue North



1814 4th Avenue North